

Message Text

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21

ACTION COME-00

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 RSC-01 /019 W

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R 241020Z NOV 74

FM AMEMBASSY JIDDA

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9354

INFO AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI

AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

AMCONSUL DHAHRAN

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MANAMA

UNCLAS JIDDA 6887

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: BEXP, XF

SUBJECT: APPAREL MANUFACTURERS ASSOCIATION (IOGA MISSION)

REF: STATE 242260

1. MARKET FOR SUBJECT MISSION APPEARS TO BE MARGINAL AT BEST. ON TOP OF SMALL POPULATION IS ADDED UNIVERSAL ADHERENCE TO TRADITIONAL GARB BY SAUDI MEN. WOMEN, CHILDREN AND FOREIGN POPULATION CERTAINLY REPRESENT A MARKET OF SORTS, BUT U.S. MANUFACTURERS WILL HAVE TO COMPETE WITH VERY CHEAP ASIAN (ESPECIALLY TAIWANESE) PRODUCTS ON THE ONE HAND AND SNOB APPEAL OF FRENCH LABELS FOR THE WEALTHY ON THE OTHER. ("MIDDLE CLASS" MARKET HERE IS MINUTE, EVEN BY LOCAL POPULATION STANDARDS). SOUNDING OUT OF LOCAL RETAILERS INVARIABLY PRODUCED IMMEDIATE REACTION OF "WHAT ARE THE PRICES?".

2. ABILITY OF POST TO SUPPORT MISSION DIFFICULT TO PROJECT AT PRESENT, DEPENDING ON WHETHER REQUESTED PERSONNEL INCREASES WILL MATERIALIZE AND WHETHER PRESENT PACE OF ACTIVITY CONTINUES THROUGH THE SPRING

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OR NOT. AT WORST WE CAN PROVIDE BASIC ASSISTANCE IN

ARRANGING APPOINTMENTS, ETC. EVEN IF EXTENSIVE HAND-HOLDING NOT POSSIBLE.

3. HOTEL SPACE: BEST HOTEL IN JIDDA ONLY ON VERGE OF FIRST-CLASS STATUS. WHETHER ROOMS WILL BE EASY TO COME BY IN MAY AGAIN DEPENDS ON WHETHER CURRENT SPATE OF VISITORS, CONFERENCES, MISSIONS, ETC., BEGINS TO SUBSIDE BY NEXT SPRING.

4. ON BALANCE, IF IT COMES TO A CHOICE BETWEEN JIDDA AND TEHRAN, DEFINITELY RECOMMEND THAT JIDDA BE DROPPED. AT BEST A STOP HERE SHOULD BE PROGRAMMED ONLY IF THERE IS CONSIDERABLE INTHUSIASM TO EXPLORE A SMALL AND VERY UNCERTAIN MARKET.
AKINS

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